MEDITATIONS ON VOTES FOR WOMEN

CROTHERS

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By Samuel M. Crothers

MEDITATIONS ON VOTES FOR WOMEN.
HUMANLY SPEAKING.
AMONG FRIENDS.
BY THE CHRISTMAS FIRE.
THE PARDONER'S WALLET.
THE ENDLESS LIFE.
THE GENTLE READER.
OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES: THE AUTOCRAT AND HIS FELLOW BOARDERS. With Portrait.
MISS MUFFET'S CHRISTMAS PARTY. Illustrated.

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Meditations on Votes for Women

Meditations On

VOTES

For WOMEN

Together with

ANIMADVERSIONS on
the closely related subject
of *VOTES* for *MEN*

BY

SAMUEL McCHORD CROTHERS

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A Dedicatory Epistle

To American Gentlewomen

IF the grand old name of "gentleman" has been soiled by ignoble use, its correlative "lady" has not altogether escaped the vulgarizing touch of those who have identified it with the accidents rather than with the realities of social life. But the name of "gentlewoman" has had a happier fortune. When we speak of one as a gentlewoman, we are thinking not of her station but of her character. We think of one with gracious manners and sweet reasonableness of soul.

You American gentlewomen are not iconoclasts. You instinctively realize that the things which you hold most precious were not made in a day and if they are destroyed cannot be reproduced by an eager reformer. Courtesy, kindliness, sympathy, generosity, are not to be established by a political campaign nor assured by an act of legislature. You know that habit is more than impulse and that it is only through patient training that habits can be changed for the better. You have a dislike for loud and noisy methods and

and a distrust of those who say, "Let us do evil that good may come." You are the guardians of the enduring things. You have believed that

> *"The World-soul knows his own affair,*
> *Forelooking when he would prepare*
> *For the next ages men of mould*
> *Well embodied, well ensouled,*
> *He cools the present's fiery glow,*
> *Sets the life pulse strong but slow."*

You believe that it is better for the world that its women should have a strong slow life pulse than that they should exhaust their energies in spasmodic efforts. When you read from some advance agent of the new era that Raphael's Madonna no longer represents any worthy ideal of womanhood, you are not convinced, especially if you discover that the talented iconoclast is herself a nervous wreck. There is a health and poise both physical and spiritual which seems to you more valuable than any number of advanced ideas.

I sympathize thoroughly with your point of view. It is when we come to practical applications that questions arise that require discrimination. Each specific question must be judged without prejudice.

When

When we agree upon a high ideal of manhood that does not determine what a man must do under all the circumstances that arise. Manliness does not imply that a man should or should not be a Free Trader or an Osteopath. Free Trade and Osteopathy have their adherents, some of whom are manly and some are not.

In like manner womanliness is a quality which we gladly recognize, but which does not determine the kind of work a woman may engage in, or the particular cause she may advocate. One recognizes a gentlewoman in her own house. One recognizes her also in the business office or on the political platform. Those of us who are conservative enough still to read the Victorian poets may accept their assertion that womanly graciousness was not incompatible with the exercise of the prerogatives of the head of a great empire. It all depended on the way the necessary work was done.

There are many things connected with the agitation for equal suffrage with which you do not sympathize. There are methods and ideas which conflict with what seems to you more precious than any political rights.

You

You fear that womanly qualities may suffer in an unseemly scramble for power.

I do not say that such fears are groundless. I only ask you to consider whether there are not necessary risks which must be taken for the sake of an advancing civilization. There may be good reasons why women should not vote, but there is no reason why you should not throw aside the poor reasons. They only clutter up the mind. It is not a matter of personal preference but of public policy. What is required is a certain mental detachment and good-humored willingness to look at the subject from many angles. The great thing is to be willing to think it over.

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MEDITATIONS ON VOTES *for* WOMEN

THERE is an illuminating expression that is used now and then — "When I come to think about it." It is generally used when a controversy is over or an unwelcome truth at last admitted, and there is nothing more to be done about it. A person has had a very decided opinion and has expressed it with great vehemence. All his efforts have proved unavailing and the thing against which he protested has come to pass. Then in a sudden burst of common sense he resolves to sit down and think about it.

Why he did not adopt this meditative method in the first place he cannot exactly explain. Perhaps it is because in the struggle for existence man is compelled to be an active rather than a reflective creature. Thought is apt to come in the form of an afterthought. Wisdom is essentially retrospective.

The

The process of thinking things over in advance would save from a great many antagonisms. Reflection has a soothing effect upon the mind if it is properly managed. We talk of Time as the great reconciler. This is true only when time is taken for fruitful meditation. The man described in the first Psalm who was accustomed to meditate on the law of the Lord day and night must have avoided many irritating conflicts with his neighbors. He had better things to think about. Marcus Aurelius, who was much given to meditation, saw that it was folly to "Cæsarize." Most emperors waste a great deal of time in Cæsarizing.

Meditation has an advantage over discussion. It takes two to carry on a discussion, whereas any one who is so disposed can meditate. Moreover, in a discussion we are limited. We cannot contemplate the whole subject, but we must take one side while our opponent takes the other. We cannot look at the facts as they go about their ordinary business in the actual workaday world. They must be mobilized. They leave their peaceful avocations

avocations, hurriedly put on a uniform, and flock to the colors. When we review them we think of nothing but their fighting value.

However conscientiously we choose sides we must reject or ignore some fact which in other moods we should recognize as having significance. We must sacrifice everything to efficiency. Sometimes we must assume something which is quite doubtful for the sake of the argument. To change sides is an awkward and perilous maneuver, like changing seats in a canoe. In order to preserve the equilibrium of the discussion we must keep our original place.

But in meditation we are free. We can consider one side and then the other without embarrassment. If we change our opinion because the weight of evidence has shifted there is no one to exult over us and make us ashamed. If we recognize that we have been mistaken in our assumptions there is no one to say "I told you so." We quietly make the necessary adjustments to ever-changing reality, and go on with our business of thinking. We are not required to reach any predetermined

mined conclusions. We have no nervous anxiety to catch any particular train of thought, as we are traveling on our own feet, and are willing to put up wherever the night finds us. Hence it is that while discussions go on with great vigor, and few are convinced except of the righteousness of their own cause, meditation often brings unexpected results. When we meditate we sometimes change our minds. This is a beneficent achievement, for it renders it unnecessary for us to spend all our strength in attempting to change the order of the universe and the whole direction of human progress, in order to get a sense of the fitness of things.

It sometimes happens that by relaxing our minds, and especially our wills, we get at possibilities of harmony between elements which seemed to be in hopeless antagonism. A contemplative attitude allows us to see the general direction in which things are going. On the evening of a national election we are more apt to get the news by staying away from our own party headquarters where only one kind of news is promulgated.

There

There are few subjects which have of late been more vehemently debated than the extension of the right of suffrage to women. It seems to offer peculiar enticements to controversialists. So much can be said for and against it, and so easily. Moreover, it is a debate which is peculiarly adapted to those of regular habits who do not care to go far afield in search of opponents. It can be carried on uninterruptedly in the home circle.

Persons who love to discuss the different ways in which Civilization is about to be ruined, and who evoke the various perils that threaten, are often embarrassed by the difficulty of visualizing the dangers that impend. The Yellow Peril, the Slav Peril, Pan-Germanism, Pan-Islamism, and the rest, are foreign in their nature, and need the historic imagination to realize them. But a citizen who gets the notion that the Woman Peril threatens to overwhelm all things holy, may see it smiling at him across the tea-table. It is no figment of the imagination that confronts him. And the Peril is always able to talk back when he cries Avaunt!

But

But while there is a great amount of serious — and less serious — discussion, there seems to be a lack of meditation. There is the strident cry of "Votes for Women!" which is answered by negative voices which are not always as gentle as one might expect. There are the exaggerations which always accompany partisan discussion.

It would be a counsel of perfection to ask any one to meditate on Votes for Women with the same detachment with which one might meditate on the Passage of Time, the Beauties of Nature, or the Vanity of Human Greatness. But a certain amount of meditation is possible even to the most earnest.

Meditation dwells on the obvious, upon broad aspects of the subject that always form the common background of every discussion. There are things so obvious that clever people never mention them. They "go without saying." It is, however, necessary now and then to say them just to remind ourselves that they are still going. Some of these obvious considerations may be suggested as profitable for some leisure hour when we are not anxious to convince

convince any one, but only to clear our minds of prejudices which disquiet us.

That women have existed since the beginning of the human race, and that they have always taken part in human development.

THIS is a fact which seems to be ignored rather than contradicted by eager disputants. Yet in reality it is very important and comforting.

In reading certain feministic literature one suffers from a nervous shock, such as comes when the fire engines rush up to put out a fire in the kitchen stove. In fact there are two shocks — first, that which comes from the thought that there is a great conflagration, and then that which comes from the discovery that nothing has happened out of the ordinary.

There is an urgency as of some new and unheard-of power that has just come into the world. Heretofore this has been a man's world arranged for his convenience. Now Woman has appeared, open-eyed and armed, and all things are to be changed. Religion, the State, the Family, are to be reorganized according to a strictly feministic plan. If the ultimatum is not at once accepted we may look

look for that dreadful catastrophe, a sex war.

No wonder that the honest citizen awakened by the loud cry is not in the best of humor. And when he is called opprobrious names like Victorian and Early-Victorian he is inclined to be surly. It is all so sudden. It appears that all the ideals of womanhood that he has revered are to be overturned and trodden under foot by cohorts of Amazons shouting "Down with the Home."

Now, the honest citizen loves his home as he loves nothing else, and does not take kindly to the idea that it should be destroyed. There is a certain vagueness about the threats. Just exactly what the new plan is he does not know. The only thing in the programme of revolutionary Feminism that he can get hold of, and that lies within the sphere of practical politics, is the demand for the ballot. Here is a limited battle-ground where the friends of the Home and of Christian marriage can make a stand. They can put up a stout resistance till they can find out what it is all about.

If the home-loving citizen would sit down and

and think about it he would realize that this is a false alarm. The entrance of woman in the sphere of human action is no new thing, like the aeroplane or the submarine. She has always been here, and has always been influential. Such civilization as we have is largely of her making. If civilization itself is a crime she has been accessory both before and after the fact.

We cannot treat half the human race as an altogether unknown quantity. That women can fight is no new discovery. Jael the wife of Heber the Kenite knew how to wield a hammer for her cause. Let any one who is alarmed at the advent of women in industry meditate on the business woman described in the book of Proverbs.

"She seeketh wool and flax, and worketh willingly with her hands. . . . She bringeth her food from afar. She riseth while it is yet night, and giveth meat to her household and a portion to her maidens. She considereth a field, and buyeth it: with the fruit of her hands she planteth a vineyard. She girdeth her loins with strength, and strengtheneth her arms.

arms. She perceiveth that her merchandise is profitable. . . . She layeth her hands to the distaff, and her hands hold the spindle. . . . She maketh herself coverings of tapestry. . . . She maketh fine linen and selleth it; and delivereth girdles unto the merchant."

Having taken over the woolen and flax industry with the business of spinning and weaving, having engaged in agriculture and dealt in merchandise and real estate, she superintended the general charities. "She stretcheth out her hand to the poor; yea, she reacheth forth her hands to the needy." There was nothing left for her husband but to sit at the gate and praise his wife.

Nothing in the modern situation is quite so one-sided as this ancient description of the sphere of women. But somehow men have survived.

I suspect that this bit of feministic literature represented an ideal that was not always realized. It was the exceptional Hebrew woman rather than the average.

As to present-day Feminism we must remember that it represents a literary cult. It

It is a term like Realism, or Romanticism, or the Lake Poets.

When you attempt to read the literature of the Futurists you are not alarmed about the Future. There is no danger that it will be like that. When the Future comes the present-day Futurists will seem not weird but only quaint. And when you read a Feminist book with its astonishing programme, you need not fear that that is what women will do when they get the vote. You are only reading what one woman thinks they would do if they were all as clever as she is.

You say that you are glad that they are not. You prefer the common sense and domestic feeling of the average woman to these literary vagaries. Perhaps you are right. You may be interested in a simple little device by which the opinion of the average woman might from time to time be ascertained.

That theories are sometimes several sizes too large for their practical applications.

WHEN John Knox was in the thick of his fight for religious, or rather for Presbyterian, freedom he found that the fiercest opposition came from a few royal

royal women. Margaret had continued in the Netherlands the persecution which Isabella of Castile had carried on in Spain. Mary Stuart and her mother were implacable foes of the Presbytery, and Mary Tudor sat on the throne of England.

No wonder that the fiery reformer made a sweeping generalization and identified feminine influence with Popery. He remembered the conflict of Elijah against Jezebel, and he blew the First Blast of the Trumpet against the monstrous Regiment of Women.

But before a second blast could be blown "Bloody Mary" died and Elizabeth came to the throne. Knox was too good a Scotchman to give up a doctrine which he had once promulgated, but he was too good a politician to insist on strict construction under the changed circumstances. He remembered that Jezebel was not the only woman mentioned in the Bible. There was Deborah who ruled Israel wisely. Of course Deborah was an exception. Elizabeth was a second Deborah, and therefore a second exception.

The predicament of Knox is that of all eager

eager controversialists. A decent respect for the opinion of mankind induces us to put our contention on some broad grounds which mankind can appreciate. Issues that are in reality local and limited are discussed as if they involved the whole universe. There is always a satisfaction in believing that the stars in their courses are fighting for us. We try to identify the stellar orbits with our plan of campaign.

Suppose the question arises as to whether it is expedient that women should vote in the State of Connecticut. This is really a finite proposition. But when it becomes a subject of debate it expands into the infinite. It takes on a cosmic character. The biologists, the anthropologists, the physiologists, and the animal psychologists, are called to give expert testimony. Even the botanists take a hand as their science also takes cognizance of the difference between male and female. Dire prophecies are uttered in regard to the race degeneracy which would follow an unscientific amendment to the constitution of Connecticut.

The

The trouble with these scientific arguments is that they prove too much. If the analogy of plants and insects, and even of the higher mammals, is followed, the female of the species should not vote. Neither should she play bridge nor read a newspaper nor attend church nor play the piano.

These activities are all without any warrant from sub-human experience. It is doubtful if any of them are particularly good for the health.

The fact is that mankind has broken so many precedents, and taken so many risks, for the sake of moral and intellectual improvements, that it is inclined to go its own way. It asks what is right for human beings under civilized conditions. If animals and savages are not able to live in this way so much the worse for them. The next step in advance is always dangerous. It involves a new adjustment, and the exercise of powers that have not heretofore been used. But the only thing to do is to meet the conditions as they arise, and keep as cheerful as possible while doing so.

During

That equal suffrage is not the first step in an impending revolution, but only a necessary adjustment to the results of a revolution that has already happened.

DURING the past generation many things have come to pass which were really revolutionary. The higher education of women, their entrance into business and the professions, and their active participation in all sorts of public work marked a profound change.

Like all great revolutions, it came not out of the whim of a little body of revolutionists, but through the pressure of necessity. The orthodox doctrine that the place of women is in the home is as ancient as the home itself. When the home was a mere tent it was understood that the woman of the family had it in charge. But this did not mean that the only occupation of women was the rearing of her children and the keeping of the house in order. We have seen how various were the activities of the Hebrew woman, who without leaving her home carried on all kinds of lucrative business.

Up to a comparatively recent time industry was largely domestic. The family was a unit in manufacturing as it still is in agriculture on the smaller farms. Each member of the family

family contributed directly to the support of all.

With the coming in of the factory system, the rush to the cities began, and the home industries suffered. A great part of woman's work was taken away from her. All sorts of labor-saving inventions made the necessary tasks of housekeeping and food preparing less burdensome. Under these circumstances the formula, "Woman's place is in the home," came to have a meaning different from that which it had ever had before. It meant that the man should be the active worker, while the woman should be the priestess to guard the fire on the domestic hearth. In the mean time the fire on the hearth had itself become a figure of speech.

That this highly sentimental theory of the division of labor should be long acquiesced in by active-minded women was not to be expected. When a large part of their work was taken from their homes, they did what human beings have always done under economic pressure — they followed their work.

Women can no longer profitably spin and weave

weave by their own firesides. They spin and weave in factories. They cannot sell goods at their doorsteps. They sell goods in the department stores. Children are educated not privately but publicly. Therefore the woman who might have been a governess becomes a teacher in the public schools. The working-woman everywhere goes to her work because her work does not come to her.

In thus seeking the work that had escaped from her, the modern woman discovered all sorts of ways of making a living. She could make a career for herself. One educational opportunity after another was opened to her. She was not content with the Young Ladies' Boarding School with its showy "accomplishments." She would go to college with her brother, she would choose disciplinary studies, she would fit herself for work that people are ready to pay for. All this she has actually done. There are few departments of modern industry where there are not women who are acknowledged as experts.

And then the modern passion for Social Service came, and educated women have responded

responded to it. Ideals of individual culture have not satisfied them. They are eager to take part in the vast labor of reorganizing human society. They have learned that disease and pauperism and crime are social maladies as well as individual misfortunes. If these evils are to be lessened, it must be by united and intelligent effort. It requires intellect as well as a kindly heart. The social worker leaves her own home to help other people make homes that are worth having. She has to be an acute observer and an independent thinker. She is a member of a new profession and is already demanding and receiving professional training.

Already the term "woman's rights" has an old-fashioned sound. The thousands of women in influential positions are not shrieking for the right to vote.

They are too busy with plans for the common good. In the opinion of such women the proposed reform in the laws relating to the suffrage is not a radical measure, but a bit of unfinished business left over by the last generation.

There

That the driving power of the movement for equal suffrage is not Feminism but democracy.

THERE are doubtless some women who seek the vote because they think it would give a distinctly feminine cast to the government, and lead to the triumph of ideals held by women and not by men. But the vast majority seek it because they are interested in those public questions in which men and women are equally concerned. They believe in a democratic order of society, and this is one of its expressions.

Democracy does not promise much to any special class. It allows no one to have all he asks. Because you are rich, or have had a classical education, or an excellent set of grandfathers, is no reason why you should have more than one vote. You shall cast one ballot and the garbage-man shall do the same. If you do not acquiesce cheerfully in this arrangement, you may be a gentleman and a scholar, but you are not a good democrat.

Or because you are a woman and have a charming personality, your opinion shall have no more than its proper arithmetical value. You

You shall not, on election day, count for more than one.

To those who desire special consideration, democracy is not pleasing. It takes away more than it seems to give. It is an equalizing tendency by which every valley shall be exalted and every mountain and hill shall be made low. The democratization of society has gone on by slow degrees. The democratic mind cannot accept the disfranchisement of any class as permanent. It represents a vacuum that must be filled. When once the idea of popular government has been accepted, there must be a definition of the term "the people." What is meant by "We the people of the United States"? In what sense do American women use the phrase? Or do they prefer not to use it, but rather to say, "they the people"?

These are democratic queries which cannot be escaped. They continue to recur so long as the political status of women is uncertain. The programmes of feminism and democracy may coincide up to a certain point but they are not identical. The enthusiastic Feminist is

is thinking of the maximum of woman's influence. Democracy is chiefly concerned about the irreducible minimum.

That it is an ancient observation that man is "born of woman."

A CURIOUS thing about the discussions in regard to the sphere of women is the notion of heredity that slips in unawares. One might imagine that we were talking about two races which had different origins and histories. Women we are told, have had no long civic experience. For ages their attention has been confined to domestic affairs. It is too much to expect that in a generation or two they will acquire that political aptitude which has been the inheritance of men. Centuries must elapse before evolution has had time to do its work in developing their latent capacities for citizenship.

It is somewhat of a shock when we are reminded that man, the highly developed political animal, is born of woman. To be sure his political sagacity was not manifested at birth, but has been acquired through education. No one has yet stated that natural capacity for political

political action comes through one parent only. Caius and Tiberius Gracchus had a genius for politics and their father was a distinguished man before them. But the mother of the Gracchi seemed to have understood what Roman patriotism meant as well as any of them. When we come to think about it, we see no reason why she should n't.

A brother and sister stand side by side. They derive their lives from the same source, their family history is identical. But the external history of their ancestors, their station in life, their political or religious beliefs, their business successes have no influence upon them except as the memory of them has been preserved and thus serves as an incentive or as a warning. As for political experience it is preserved and handed down not by biological but by educational processes. It is something that is taught to each successive generation, and when it is not carefully taught it is lost.

Thomas Fuller dedicated his "Historie of the Holy Warre" to "Edward Montagu and Sir John Powlet sonnes and heirs to the Right

Right Honourable Edward Lord Montagu of Boughton and John Lord Montagu of Hinton."

The dedication breathes the fine spirit of inherited public service. The nobly born youths are told that there are "foure principall actours on the Theatres of Great Families; the Beginner, Advancer, Continuer and Ruiner." The boys are urged not to be content to be mere continuers of their family history but advancers. "None can go on in our English chronicles but must meet with a *Montagu* or a *Powlet* either in peace in their gowns or in war in their armour. . . . Your youthfull virtues are so promising that you cannot come off in your riper age with credit without performing what may redound to the advancing the honour of your family and without building your houses one storie higher in the English Historie."

He urges them to the study of history that they may gain that experience which will enable them to add to the glory of their houses.

"What a pitie is it to see a proper Gentleman have such a crick in his neck that he cannot

not look backward, yet no better is he who cannot see behind him the actions which long since were performed. History maketh a young man old, without either wrinkles or gray hairs, priviledging him with the experience of age, without either the infirmities or inconveniences thereof."

It is only in that way that political experiences can be inherited. In an aristocracy it is passed from generation to generation as a precious family tradition. In a democracy it is the great aim of public education to prepare the new citizens for their duties by imparting to them the lessons of experience gained by their country in the past.

That the average boy is capable of being educated sufficiently to perform the common duties of citizenship we all believe. That the average girl is incapable of being educated to the same extent one is loath to believe.

If as a matter of fact the average woman of to-day is indifferent to public affairs and incapable of fixing her mind upon an issue long enough to give an intelligent opinion, one hesitates to attribute it to a congenital weakness

ness of the understanding. It seems to be more reasonable to attribute it to mis-education. Even the greatest admirers of pedagogical science admit that there is a great deal of mis-education in the world.

The hopeful thing to remember is that there is a great difference between a biological process and an educational process. In biology we cannot do much in a generation. In education a generation is all the time there is.

If we should make up our minds that the political experience of the race was the inheritance of our daughters as well as of our sons, we could give it to them in precisely the same time. What use they would then make of it would depend upon themselves.

That while men and women have been long on the earth, it does not follow that new types may not be developed from time to time.

THOUGH Feministic theories must not be taken too literally, they are yet suggestive of changes that are taking place. The essential thing is that many women are becoming conscious of what some women have always felt, that some of the limitations which have been accepted as natural are in reality only conventional, and so

so can be removed. The only way to determine what is natural and what is conventional is by the method of experiment. By pushing against every barrier women can force those that are artificial to give way. In this struggle for freedom there must necessarily be evoked a challenging spirit which is not very gracious.

In a miracle play a veiled figure is introduced and walks across the stage. It is explained that this is Adam as he goes to be created.

Always among the completed characters that crowd the stage is the inchoate figure of the creature that is on the way to be created. The Old Adam is a well-known character, but the New Adam is an enigma. In each generation there is a conversation like this, —

"How do you do, Adam!"

"I do not do. I am not a creature. I am The About-to-be-Created."

"I wonder how you will turn out when you are created?"

"I don't know," growls Adam, "but I do not intend to be like you."

This is ungracious and does not tend to endear

endear the new candidate for existence to those whose self-esteem is wounded. But when the New Adam has been created, there is more family resemblance to the Pre-Adamites than he is willing to admit.

The New Woman is inclined to scout all the ideals of womanhood that have gone before. She intends to be absolutely different. This is because she is on her preliminary walk across the stage. After the New Woman has been created the newness will gradually wear off and the ineradicable womanliness will come out. We may be quite sure of that.

That the lawless acts of certain English militants only prove that some women are no wiser than some men.

SOME men are fanatics, and so are some women. Fanaticism has always accompanied progress, but this does not prove, as some people imagine, that it is the cause of it. Railroad accidents accompany railroading but do not add to its profits. From the manager's point of view, a train on the track is worth two in the ditch.

Every cause has had its fanatics, — persons who in their zeal are willing to sacrifice all other interests to it without regard to the ordinary

ordinary demands of justice and good-fellowship. They demand "direct action," which usually means action that disregards the rights of neutrals. No one can tell when a fanatical turn may be given to a movement that has gone on peacefully. The question of the right way of administering the Lord's Supper has been the occasion of most cruel wars. The Anabaptists of the sixteenth century held views which most people in these days would think harmless enough, but then they became the occasion of all sorts of anarchistic outbreaks. There are multitudes of lawabiding people who look forward to the second coming of Christ, but in the mean time go quietly about their business. But there was a time when this expectancy took on a militant form. Wild-eyed Fifth Monarchy men proclaimed the reign of King Jesus, and to bring it in by direct action sought to capture the city of London and kill the Lord Mayor. Then it was time to call out the trainbands.

Usually these militant outbreaks can be accounted for less by anything in the nature of

of the cause which is fought for than in the general temper of the times. They are evidences of a dangerous nervous tension.

We are able to understand the so-called militancy in England better than we could a short time ago. We see its relation to the movement for suffrage to be more or less accidental. Now that a great war has come, we see how feverish was the condition of the peoples who looked forward to it with suppressed passion and vague foreboding. Not knowing just whom they were to fight, but feeling that fighting was inevitable, they conceived of everything in militant form. There were to be not only wars between Slav and Teuton, but between Celt and Saxon, class wars and industrial wars without number.

Even the efforts in behalf of the public health were conceived of under warlike imagery. There were wars proclaimed against the fly and the mosquito and the germs of tuberculosis.

Earnest women, perceiving that they had been denied civil rights, and accepting the prevalent

prevalent philosophy, imagined that when they were breaking tradesmen's windows and destroying works of art and setting fire to unguarded buildings they were making war. It was supposed to be that appeal to force through which all human rights have been won. Then suddenly, to those who were playing with fire, the great conflagration came. War grim and relentless is upon the world. All make-believe militancies shrink into insignificance.

Those who, carried away by a misleading analogy, thought that the suffrage for women could be obtained by threats, and by sporadic acts of lawlessness, must perceive that their tactics are not now effective. Nations which are fighting for their lives are not likely to be coerced by what are only petty annoyances. When the history of our time comes to be written, militancy will be seen to be a symptom of a disturbed state of public mind, which preceded the great and terrible war. That women yielded to the nervous strain and for the time lost their balance is not to be wondered at. Men did the same.

Our

That agitators sometimes deliberately plan to make themselves disagreeable and that they frequently succeed beyond their expectations.

OUR problems are simplified when we get into the habit of calling things by their right names. Arson, for example, is the name for a particular crime. We cannot accept it as a legitimate means of political agitation. Much as we may believe in the righteousness of a cause, we do not believe that it can be advanced by acts which in their nature are criminal. We hold to the opinion of the good clergyman —

> "Who, when religious strife waxed mad,
> Still held, in spite of all his learning,
> That if a man's beliefs were bad,
> They would n't be improved by burning.

But the agitator has his legitimate field of activity. While we have a right to demand that he stop short at acts that are criminal, it is too much to ask that he should not make himself disagreeable. His object is to arouse those who are at ease in Zion and to make their slumbers impossible. He must irritate and alarm those who are unconscious that anything is wrong. To do this he must make himself as unpleasant as possible.

I know a lady with a fine sense of propriety and

and a musical ear who is also the owner of an automobile. When she first became the possessor of the motor-car she chose a horn whose dulcet notes pleased her. The sound was an harmonious even joyous invitation to the pedestrian to get out of the way. But the pedestrian was soothed into obliviousness of the approaching danger, and absent-minded chickens meandered unwarned to their doom. Now she has a horn that shrieks like an enraged fiend. The wayfarer is startled out of his reverie and irritated into immediate and salutary action. The raucous sound was dictated by the principle "Safety first."

The agitator is different from the fanatic. He knows precisely what he is doing. That which he intends to agitate is the nerves of quiet people who refuse to look at facts. If he can get on their nerves he has accomplished his purpose. His object is to make himself so unendurable that in mere self-defence they will have to remove the grievance of which he complains.

The point to remember is that the talent for making one's self obnoxious is a personal gift

gift which is not shared by all the members of a party. Moreover, it has nothing whatever to do with the cause for which the agitator works. There have been reformers like Bright and Cobden who have gained their ends by the methods of persuasion. Parnell, on the other hand, in cold blood determined that English statesmen should have no comfort till they did justice to Ireland.

In the reign of George III well-disposed Englishmen were driven almost frantic by the cry "Wilkes and Liberty." Either Wilkes or Liberty could have been dealt with individually, but their combination was maddening. The liberty-loving person was like the lover of fresh air in a mosquito-infested region. He would like to sit on the piazza in the evening and breathe the unpolluted atmosphere. But the buzzing pests will not allow him a moment's peace. And so he goes into the house and slams the door. He does n't like that either.

The moral, of course, is that he should join with his neighbors in draining the swamp in which the mosquitoes breed. But this is a consideration

consideration that does not come to him at once. Like Pharaoh he endures the plagues as long as he can without listening to suggestions of permanent reform. He "hardens his heart as in the provocation."

That which irritated the Englishman of his day was that Wilkes had such a way of putting them in the wrong. The fact is that these excellent people could n't put themselves right without changing their whole system, and that they were not ready to do.

Let us admit that the agitator is not a lovable character. He does n't mean to be. Yet he may be very useful. He is so unpleasant that we try to get rid of him. After a time we learn that the only way to get rid of him is to remedy the conditions out of which he arises. His real strength lies in his grievance. If we can find out what the grievance is and redress it, the agitator will find his occupation gone.

Women do not naturally enjoy the rôle of the agitator. If they assume it, it is from a sense of duty. They know that they do not appear to advantage. When large numbers of women adopt the unpleasant methods of agitation

agitation it is proof that they believe that they have a grievance. It is time for the people who are disturbed to try and find out what the grievance is.

That the martyr spirit should be respected even when we do not understand it.

IN the First Book of the Maccabees we read how King Antiochus sought to destroy the Jewish ritual, and how all sorts of severe measures were put upon the statute book and rigidly enforced.

"Howbeit many in Israel were fully resolved and confirmed in themselves not to eat any unclean thing. Wherefore they chose rather to die that they might not be defiled with meats, and that they might not profane the holy covenant; so they died."

It is impossible to read the story without a sudden thrill when we come to the simple statement, "so they died."

How incomprehensible to our minds are the scruples about forbidden meats. We have long since accepted the common-sense dictum of St. Paul that "meat commendeth us not to God: for neither, if we eat, are we the better; neither, if we eat not, are we the worse."

worse." But not so did these Jews think. To them it was a matter of supreme importance — and "so they died."

Wherever we meet it the martyr spirit gives us pause. The martyr is literally a witness. He is one who testifies to his heart's faith not by words alone, but by deeds. He is loyal even unto death. He is not a fanatic willing to do evil that good may come. He is one who deliberately does what he believes to be good, though sure that evil will thereby come to him. He accepts the evil as something inevitable. He is not merely an agitator with calculated provocations. He simply stands by the unpopular cause because he cannot do otherwise. To him it means personal suffering which he voluntarily endures.

One cannot dismiss "militancy" and all that has accompanied it without for a moment pausing to do justice to a spirit that has been evoked by it.

The martyr spirit, wherever it has manifested itself, must be recognized with reverence. Women who are of the stuff martyrs are made of have appeared. We may refuse to

to accept the pseudo-martyrs at their own estimation, but the testimony of the real martyrs cannot be laughed away.

That a practical joke eventually loses its point.

THERE is no such hidebound conservative as your confirmed humorist. Charles Lamb tells of the chimney sweep who stood laughing as if his jest would last forever. It is hard for any one to realize that all jests are mortal.

The most primitive and persistent form of humor is the practical joke. A trick that never fails to delight is that of playing on the superstition of our fellow creatures, by means of some new powers which we can use but which they have not discovered. The joker who gets hold of a new tool can perform what seem to them miracles. He is looked upon as a superior being and obeyed as such. They never suspect that if they had the same tools they could do the same things. All this is very amusing to the person who performs the trick. He is very careful not to give away his profitable secret.

The Man with the Hoe may seem to you to

to be a very dull fellow. But you should see him with the Man with the Forked Stick. In an hour he can perform agricultural feats which the forked-sticker could not do in a day. How insolently he wields his hoe and flourishes it as a scepter. He belongs to a ruling race. Does he allow his inferior to touch the sacred hoe? Not at all! Fire might descend from heaven to avenge such sacrilege.

It was a great joke for the first horsemen to descend upon a valley where the people were not of analytic minds, and so were unable to distinguish between the horse and the rider. To be mistaken for centaurs was highly amusing. After that every means would be taken to keep up the illusion.

But the trouble with all such practical jokes is that after a while they are found out. The moment the victim grasps the distinction between the tool and the tool-user the spell is broken. When the Red Indian discovered that the rifle in order to be effective need not be in the hand of a white man, he ceased to think of the white man as a divine thunderer. He would have a rifle of his own, and use

use it for his own purposes. When the book gets out of the hands of the clergy into the possession of the common people, the magical power of the clergy is broken. It is found that reading and writing are not such great matters after all. The mere child can practice them if he is allowed the opportunity.

But long after the victims have been disillusioned the practical jokers keep up their airs of superiority. This is the ironical fate which pursues all governing classes. They are unable to discover the exact time when they are found out.

A long time after the commercial classes had achieved power in the state, the survivors of the old landed aristocracies continued their little jests about those who were in trade.

Frequently it happens that a particular class has been arbitrarily prevented from making use of the tools of civilization. They were then laughed at for the resultant disabilities. How amusing was the Irishman in the bad old days. Being prevented by penal laws from normal political action, it was droll to observe

observe his inaptitude for responsible citizenship.

For generations the nonconformists of England were denied entrance to the universities. How delicate was the raillery of Matthew Arnold as with unfailing precision he pointed out the weakness of the nonconformist mind. This weakness was the lack of that peculiar type of culture which was characteristic of Oxford and Cambridge.

When the artificial restrictions have been removed the tables are turned upon the jesters. It is seen that the differences in native ability do not correspond to the lines that had been before recognized. The notions about superiors and inferiors must be revised.

That there are differences in the aptitudes of men and women we may readily admit. But the only way by which these differences may be determined is by observing their behavior when they are given the same opportunities. The rule of fair play is expressed by the phrase "other things being equal." When the other things are made unequal it is difficult to come to any conclusion. To handicap one

one runner and then laugh at him because he cannot win the race is a practical joke that cannot last forever.

In the use of ordinary political machinery men had the advantage which comes to the first discoverers. But this advantage was temporary and accidental. To expect that it will always be treated as a natural superiority is to ask too much of feminine hero-worship. The vote is simply an instrument for registering the popular will. It is an invention like a cash register — only simpler. That some women should allow themselves to think of it as a mystery to be comprehended only by the more statesmanlike masculine mind is amusing to some men, —

"And gentle Dullness ever loves a joke."

That in dealing with high-spirited people we should remember that the question of right must always be settled before a question of expediency is considered.

OF course it is a question whether people should be high-spirited, and whether they do not lose money by it; but as practical persons we must take them as they are.

The mistake of the ruling classes has always been that they have reversed the order of precedence.

precedence. They have considered expediency first and have postponed questions of rights to a more convenient season.

This was the capital blunder of the Cabinet of George III. They repealed the Stamp Act as a matter of expediency, while expressing scorn for the principle on which the American colonists resisted it. Then they wondered that the colonists were not satisfied. An employer of labor will increase wages and improve working conditions and at the same time refuse to allow his workmen the liberty of action and coöperation which they demand. Then he is astonished at their ingratitude.

There are some persons of a naturally patriarchal mind, and they have all the patriarchal virtues. They like nothing better than to provide generously for a large number of dependents. They are willing to give them what is good for them in large measure well pressed down and running over. But they cannot grasp the idea that some people do not like to be dependents and be given things that are good for them. They prefer things not so good which they choose for themselves.

This

This right to choose is to them so precious that they are willing to sacrifice many comforts for it. This is all very strange to the belated patriarch who finds himself in a democratic community.

Questions of expediency come afterwards and must be eventually considered, but by the free citizen himself. He has a great many rights which he may not think it expedient to use. They are part of his reserves, to be used only in emergencies. He is none the less jealous of any infringement on these reserved rights.

St. Paul declared the doctrine of liberty, — "All things are lawful to me, but all things are not expedient"; and he told of the things he claimed a perfect right to do but which he never intended to do. His conscience moved in a wide margin of freedom.

Let us apply this doctrine to the sphere of women in modern society. They demand an equality of opportunity with men. But it does not follow that they must seize all these opportunities and use them. This would be a new and intolerable tyranny. As a citizen of the United States, I claim the free use of any public

public highway from Maine to California. I should consider it an outrage if any one should presume to prevent such free use. But this does not mean that I must turn tramp and spend all my time on the road. There are in the country a number of highways which I have no occasion to use.

The division of labor is always a matter of expediency. It is determined by considerations of efficiency. Where the workers are so organized that each one does that for which he is specially fitted, the result is better than where each one tries to do everything. But this division of labor must be subject to the test of actual experiment and must not be determined by the arbitrary will of a ruling caste. It is not expedient for me to continue to expend my energies in work for which I am not fit. This is an economic waste. But I have a right to fit myself if I can for work of my own choosing. To deny me this right is a moral waste. I expend my energies in striving for a right that ought to have been granted as a matter of course.

When "women's rights" have become a dead

dead issue, because they have all been frankly admitted, it does not follow that women will be competing more fiercely with men for the same positions. It is more likely that their work will be more highly differentiated as their natural aptitudes have free play. Once let the distinction of higher and lower be done away with, and distinctly feminine employments will take a new dignity and acquire social prestige. New professions and arts will arise where women have a natural advantage. There is no end of the possibilities of such developments if the evils of militarism could be abolished and society could have wealth and leisure enough to develop to the utmost a democratic culture.

The education of women is in a transitional state. There has been a struggle for equal educational opportunities with men. This necessarily took the form of the right to the *same* education as men. Coeducation was demanded and the demand was granted. Colleges have been established with the same requirements and the same course of study given in the men's colleges.

But

But neither coeducational institutions nor the women's colleges, as we now know them, have any claim to finality. Women have a right to the same education as men, but it may be found more expedient for them to receive a different education. Here is room for the educational genius, in the atmosphere of freedom, to make experiments.

The achievement of freedom means more than the right to share what has already been created, or to imitate what has hitherto been held as the property of others. It means liberty to create new forms more perfectly adapted to one's own requirements. It means setting up new standards of excellence and the initiation of new methods. The eager young women in our colleges have had their ambition stirred. They have demonstrated that they could if they chose perform the same intellectual work that their brothers have done. The nine days of wonder at such achievements have already passed. It is acknowledged that they can do these things as well, though perhaps not so easily. Are there not some things that they can easily do better?

To

To discover these things that come naturally and to develop them into fine arts is to add to the richness and variety of human life.

Perhaps before we are through we shall come back to the old-fashioned idea that the work of men and women is for the most part non-competitive, that one is the complement of the other. A new chivalry will arise from a fresh perception of differences. But these finer appreciations will come not by reverting to the mediæval conception of fixed status. They will come slowly as the result of innumerable experiments, as women discover the things they can do best.

That conscience works better when it has a steady job.

IN the summer one of my duties is to act as engineer to a small engine that pumps water for domestic purposes. It is a faithful little machine and fulfills the ungallant promise in its advertising circular that "an ignorant child or a woman can run it." Even I have very little difficulty with it.

When there is an ample supply of water in the well, it works steadily and without undue friction. I can leave it to do its work so long as

as the fuel lasts. But in a very dry season, when the water level is a bit uncertain, the very virtues of the engine prove its undoing. In endeavoring to pump water that is n't there, it begins to race madly, losing its balance and becoming overheated in a way that makes it seem almost human.

There is nothing so steadying as a steady job. It is spasmodic and futile effort which upsets us. It is what St. Paul described as "fighting uncertainly and beating the air."

One notices the effect of intermittent political activity on conscientious women. During the past generation there has been a great deal of it. While having no interest in the commonplace routine of public affairs, they have been called in to use their influence in regard to great moral questions which concern the home. They have been called to work for temperance legislation, and now they are interested in all that concerns the public health.

Organizations of women have worked with the greatest enthusiasm and efficiency for specific legislation. They have brought to bear the

the power which comes from an awakened conscience, and they have succeeded in their immediate aims. But this moral activity is spasmodic. It is of the nature of a crusade. The moralizing of politics is a steady job, and it tends to develop a better balanced character.

That husbands have some political rights that their wives are bound to respect.

AT a meeting in opposition to the further extension of the suffrage I heard a charming woman object to such extension on the ground that a woman already has more influence than can be measured by a mere vote. And she proved her point, at least so far as women like herself are concerned. Almost every woman has some man whom she can influence. She has a husband or a son or a brother or a lover, or perhaps two or three nephews. In voting she would only count one for her cause, but in directing the votes of those nearest her she may easily count half a dozen. In standing apart from politics she may stand above it, now and then intervening like the Homeric goddesses while all the time being invisible. Like the King, she can do no wrong, having no direct responsibility, but as

as the fountain of honor she can hold out rewards to those who are responsible. In order to win her favor they are likely to adopt the righteous opinions she recommends. Why should she give up these prerogatives of royalty in order to assume the unromantic burdens of citizenship?

As I listened I was almost converted, and was prepared to believe that government by charm was to be preferred to any of the coarse methods of democracy. It was only when I seated myself in the street-car that my reflections took another turn. The car was filled with business men returning from their work. I could not but notice how deficient in charm these citizens were. There was no subtle witchery about them that could make the worse seem the better reason, or the good reason seem better than it is. Not one of these men was capable of changing my opinion by a subtle appeal to my emotions. Any cause they advocated must have some merit independent of them in order to succeed. They were unable to invest it with any irresistible personal attraction.

I considered how helpless these men would be when they returned to their homes and were beset by the propagandists who refused a vote of their own in order that they might vote by proxy. I could not but feel that an unfair advantage was being taken of these proxies, for they might have opinions of their own, which they would like to express.

For the voter who is a son I make no plea. It is doubtless better for him to vote as his mother tells him. The voter who is a brother is amply able to take his own part, and the lover-voter yields voluntarily. But the husband of the woman with a conscience elicits my sympathy. He is so helpless. He loves his wife dearly and is ready to share her joys and sorrows, but he does not share all her opinions in regard to local government. Of course she does not choose to exercise her influence except in a great moral issue. But she will find a great moral issue or make one. From this harvest field she expects to return bearing her sheaves with her. And her husband's vote is her most precious sheaf. To be deprived of that were treason to the cause of Anti-Suffrage.

When

When the husband and wife have set their minds on the same vote, the result is not doubtful. The husband, in voting according to the dictates of his wife's conscience, feels a bitterness that he is unable to express. It was not quite fair. If his wife could have used her conscience in a more impersonal way, it would have been a good diffused over the whole community. But she concentrated it all on him and bore down all opposition.

If instead of having only one vote for the family they could have their individual votes, what a convenience it would be! It would give the husband a sense of independence like having a check book of his own.

That a voter does not vote all the time, but is allowed a number of days off in order to attend to his private business.

THAT the voter does not vote all the time is a consideration that seems to be overlooked by those who insist that if a woman exercises the right of suffrage she must neglect her duties in the home. There is a certain force in this argument. Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty, and we are told that if the conscientious citizen would outwit the machine politician and make good

good government to prevail he must always be "on the job."

But this counsel of perfection must be interpreted in the light of actual circumstances. The citizen who desires good government must also make his living, and to do this honestly requires considerable effort. There must be a reasonable compromise between public and private duty. The citizen cannot spend all his time voting on every question that comes up, for if he did there would be no one to earn money for taxes. So he makes use of various labor-saving devices, and selects persons to do most of his voting for him. This is the very essence of representative government.

Before representative government was invented the objection just mentioned held. Popular sovereignty — which rests on the principle of limited liability — being unknown, one who exercised sovereignty had to give up all other business.

In the days of the Judges, Jotham shouted from the top of Mount Gerizim a pungent parable. "The trees went forth on a time to anoint a king over them." The useful trees declined

declined the office because it interfered with their proper business. "The olive tree said unto them, 'Should I leave my fatness, wherewith by me they honor God and man, and go to be promoted over the trees?'" The fig tree would not leave his figs, nor the vine his wine "which cheereth God and man." The representatives of the better elements having refused the nomination, it was offered to the bramble, who enthusiastically accepted, and announced his policy, which was at once to destroy the cedars of Lebanon.

If the trees had formed themselves into a republic instead of accepting a monarchical form of government they might have escaped from their dilemma. They would have planned some way by which the olive tree and the fig tree, while still bearing their proper fruit, might participate in the government of the grove, and safeguard their common interests. They might have no time "to wave to and fro over the trees," but they might do their share in more solid work.

It is along this line that improvements in governments have been made. We must have

a

a certain number of persons who give all their time to highly specialized forms of public work, but there is opportunity also for the private citizen to make his influence felt. Government by the people means that the man of science who cannot leave his researches, the artist who is loyal to his art, the farmer who will not leave his lands untilled in order to talk politics at the village store, all have a chance to influence the policy of their country. If they can find time for nothing else, they can at least vote for the party that comes nearest to their own ideas.

The home-keeping woman's business may make great demands upon her, but the demands are not greater or more insistent than those which come in other businesses in which public-spirited citizens are engaged. Housekeeping is not an absolutely continuous performance, and neither is voting.

That voting is not as fatiguing a form of political activity as vote-getting.

IT is a commonplace in the household that it is a great deal easier to do some things for one's self than to get other people to do them. This is true even if the other people are

are willing and competent. Still more is it true when they have to be persuaded and their objections overruled.

In politics to express one's own opinion is a very simple affair. Many voters content themselves with this. But to influence the votes of others so that they will express your opinions at the polls is obviously a much more difficult undertaking. The good vote-getter must rise early and keep long hours at his work. Indeed, the mere voter can hardly be said to have gone into politics at all. He has not experienced its fever and its fret.

The best example of extreme political activity is the lobbyist. He has no legal standing in the state legislature. He casts no vote. But he is specially interested in the passage of certain measures. Not voting himself, he devises means to influence the votes of other men. To him politics becomes a most exciting game. How many votes can he control? Each one must be gained through some well-devised plan. All this may be very interesting, but it is a nerve-racking business.

Such

Such an experience must come to the capable women who are organizing opposition to the further extension of the suffrage. As long as they confined themselves to a protest addressed to the general public they did not feel the embarrassment. But when they become very much in earnest, and attempt to bring political pressure to bear, they realize what hard work they have undertaken. To influence the electorate in which they have no share, they must use the methods of the lobbyist. These are the only means at their disposal. If they succeed in this most strenuous form of political activity mere voting should have no terrors for them.

Have you never looked at a well-seasoned jury as they listen to the fervent appeal of the trial lawyer. They being honest men are conscious of their responsibility, and yet the case does not seem to get on their nerves. They sit in placid expectancy, ready to be moved by a great argument, but they won't do the moving. If the evidence should be convincing, they are willing to be convinced, but if it is insufficient, they will be content to register

register the fact. Whichever way it turns out, they have the satisfaction of having done their sworn duty.

But the advocate, poor man, is in a different plight. His business is to convince them, and if he does n't he has lost his case. It is harder on the nerves to be an advocate than a juryman.

Through experience we learn to distinguish between a work and a tool that makes the work easier. If one who is unaccustomed to severe out-of-door labor were handed a crowbar, he might decline it. It represents a kind of toil to which he is averse. But a while after, if he were struggling with a sizable boulder which he was endeavoring by main strength to remove from the field, he would change his mind. If he were offered a crowbar he would say, "Thank you." He would be astonished to find how much it lightened his self-imposed toil.

It is the women who are dealing with tasks too big for them who welcome the tools of civilization. They are glad to have their labor lightened.

One

That women in expressing their opinions should be allowed to be as modest and unobtrusive as men.

ONE cannot meditate always, one must sometimes consult the dictionary. The dictionary informs us that the word "vote" comes from the Latin *votum* — a vow, a wish, a prayer. The word "suffrage" has a similar religious meaning, as is indicated by ecclesiastical usage. The suffrages in connection with the Litany indicate the petitions to the Good Lord to hear us.

The vote is therefore a kind of petition; it is an expression of personal desire and preference. In this primary sense there is nothing which the most careful person would object to as unbecoming in a woman. As a matter of fact, women always have expressed their preferences, often in the most decided manner.

But it appears that there is a secondary meaning. A vote is defined as: "The formal expression of a will, preference, wish, or choice, in regard to any measure proposed, in which the person voting has an interest in common with others, either in electing a person to fill a certain situation or office, or in passing laws, rules, regulations, etc. This vote or choice may be expressed by holding up the hand, by standing

standing up, by voice, ballot or otherwise." It is to the expression of opinion in this orderly way that objection is made. Here we come to the taboo.

A woman may express her opinion in any way that is personal and obtrusive. She may write for the press, address public meetings, organize parties, canvass from house to house, preach from the pulpit. She may make herself conspicuous as the advocate of any cause she adopts. In all this she is within her rights.

But one method she must not use — the secret ballot. It must be remembered that it is the secrecy of the ballot which distinguishes the voting of the present day from that of previous generations. The elections which Dickens describes were noisy affairs. Each elector had to declare his choice before the crowd. It was a trying performance for a quiet man who might find it hard to resist the pressure put upon him.

It was argued that the man who had not the hardihood to stand up and declare his preference in the face of a howling mob, or under the scrutiny of his employer, did not deserve

deserve to have his opinion considered. But now it is admitted that the quiet man has his rights that must be safeguarded. He is allowed to express his opinion on public matters in an impersonal way and in absolute privacy. The polling-booth is his castle, and no one need know how he marks his Australian ballot.

And it is the secrecy and the impersonal character of it that gives it its power. The one thing which the politician is afraid of is the "silent vote." After the shouting is all over, and after all those who have ostentatiously "stood up to be counted" have been counted, there is anxious waiting for another verdict. What do the quiet stay-at-home people who do no shouting think? The decision of great issues rests with them.

The woman who does not object to ostentatious methods has already ample opportunity to make her opinions known and her influence felt. But there are great numbers of women who are thoughtful but who shrink from publicity.

Why should not the quiet stay-at-home women

women have the same means for expressing themselves which are allowed to quiet stay-at-home men?

That chivalry is an excellent thing and much to be desired, when it is genuine.

LOST, somewhere on the road to the polls, by twentieth-century women, the chivalrous deference which once was theirs. This heirloom of mediæval workmanship was highly valued for its associations. If returned, no questions will be asked.

Such an advertisement would express the feelings of those who fear that political rights may be gained at too great cost. Justice is something that can be demanded, but is there not something which without any demand has been freely given and graciously received? And what if this fine gift, which has given beauty and repose, should henceforth be withheld?

That which was characteristic of old-time chivalry was the idealization of womanhood. It was a kind of religion with a ritual of its own. The manners of the gentleman expressed the attitude of one who recognized a kind of worth different from his own, and finer. What he

he would not yield to force he gladly surrendered as an act of homage. It is a feeling that has not been expressed merely by the etiquette of drawing-rooms. On the sinking ship men of all classes respond to the cry, "Women first."

But now it is suggested that when women demand their rights they must expect their privileges to be withdrawn. In the stern struggle for existence, competing on equal terms, they must look for no favors. The gracious manners of the past, with all kindly considerations, must vanish. The little courtesies which gave so much beauty to social life cease with that state of society to which they were appropriate.

This sounds very much like a threat. But the woman who has been seeking her civil rights need not take it too seriously. It is not supposed to be proper to look a gift horse in the mouth, but if the gift horse comes from an Indian giver who demands it back again, one may be pardoned for scrutinizing it closely. It serves to alleviate the sense of loss.

Real

Real chivalry is not a matter of bargain. The gentleman seeks to build up a society in which delicate sentiment is joined

> "To noble manners, as the flower
> And native growth of noble mind."

On the other hand, —

> "The churl in spirit, howe'er he veil
> His want in forms for fashion's sake,
> Will let his coltish spirit break
> At seasons through the gilded pale."

As women more and more develop their individuality, they may expect the churl in spirit to forget the forms of fashion which concealed his nature. But the noble manners which are the growth of noble minds are not affected by political changes. True chivalry has a quick appreciation of new forms of excellence. It rejoices in intellectual and moral beauty.

Romance does not all lie behind us. The recognitions on the part of men and women of certain equalities does not prevent them from also perceiving certain superiorities which they each admire in the other.

In

That example is more potent than precept.

IN the "Faërie Queene" there is introduced a militant lady Radigund who encountered the stout Sir Artegall in battle and by means of a stratagem overcame him and reduced him to ignoble slavery. Spenser cannot resist the temptation to moralize: —

"Such is the crueltie of women kynd
When they have shaken off the shame-fast band
With which wise Nature did them strongly bynd
T' obey the heasts of man's well-ruling hand,
That then all rule and reason they withstand
To purchase a licentious libertie.
But virtuous women wisely understand
That they were borne to base humilitie,
Unlesse the heavens them lift to lawful sovraintie."

We can almost see the poet in the act of composition. His condemnation of the unladylike action of Radigund leads him to a sweeping generalization, akin to that of John Knox. But the same shadow of royalty that checked the Scotch reformer falls upon him. What would Gloriana say about this prohibition of wise Nature? The poet saves himself at the last moment from his own logic. Women are born to a state of base humility, unless it should turn out, as it sometimes does, that

that they are lifted to lawful sovereignty. Elizabeth could not object to that.

The moral is so disarranged as to be hardly recognizable, when it turns out that Sir Artegall owes his deliverance not to his own prowess but to that of Britomart, "a lady knight." This valiant Britoness unites beauty and strength in a way that is irresistible. The poet in his admiration coins words like "championesse" and "conqueresse" to describe her. Britomart in shining armor rides through the forest. With her sword she slays Radigund and delivers Artegall. She then proceeds to restore the conservative order. The lady knight did what the mere man was unable to accomplish.

"So there a while they afterwards remained
Him to refresh, and her late wounds to heale;
During which space she there as princess rained,
And changing all that forme of common weale,
The liberty of women did repeale,
Which they had long usurpt; and them restoring
To men's subjection, did true justice deale;
That all they, as a goddesse her adoring
Her wisdom did admire, and hearkened to her loring."

One is puzzled over the conduct of Britomart. She was evidently sincere in her ideas as

as to the sphere of women, and determined, in her capable way, to compel them to keep within it. But did she prove her case? We are quite ready to see the virago Radigund overthrown. Her government was intolerable. But Britomart, with her superb poise, and her ability to bring things to pass, wins our confidence. She was just the person we should call for in an emergency. And yet we cannot forget that she was a woman.

> "Nor knowest thou what argument
> Thy life to thy neighbor's creed has lent."

The modern Britomart who proves herself an excellent orator and politician in opposition to the participation of women in politics must sometimes pause to consider whether her precept or her example will prove the more powerful.

That a majority vote does not represent a preponderance of physical force.

IT is useless to vote and pass laws if the popular will is not enforced. There must somewhere be a coercive power which makes itself felt in case of willful disobedience. This may be carefully concealed, but

but it must be always existent. Says honest Dogberry: —

"You are to bid any man stand, in the Prince's name.

"*2nd Watch.* How if he will not stand?

"*Dogberry.* Why, then, take no note of him, but let him go; and presently call the rest of the watch together, and thank God you are rid of a knave."

Will not this happen when majorities are obtained by the votes of women? When party feeling runs high, how will the majority, if it is not composed of potential soldiers, enforce its measures against a fighting minority?

This objection is worth thinking about if for no other reason than that it may clear our ideas in regard to the nature of the force that is behind constitutional government. When you analyze the objection you will find a naïve assumption that in order to have a stable government the majority should always be able to coerce the minority. It is a show of force. When the minority take it into account they feel that it is of no use to resist. It is as if two fleets, instead of fighting, were to do a little figuring. The fleet that is outnumbered

outnumbered yields. If it were not to do so it knows that it would be destroyed.

But this view leaves out of account many facts. As a fighting force the majority party in almost any general election in the United States is usually insufficient to inspire the opposing party with terror. There is a purely conventional element in the system which we have adopted. There is no alignment of voters which corresponds to the mobilization of rival armies. The conditions which determine an election do not correspond to those that determine a battle. Moreover, it is not at all certain that the majority of men who vote for a particular candidate would be willing to follow him to death. Their preference may be of a very mild sort. A determined minority, well disciplined and well led, might easily overthrow a mere majority of peaceful voters.

As a matter of fact this is what is done under military despotisms. No account is taken of the preferences of the majority. If the popular vote is tolerated it is a farce. A compact minority rules.

Nobody

Nobody thinks for a moment that in the late disturbances in Mexico it would have mattered in the least what portions of the community had nominally the right of suffrage. No daring chieftain, with a loyal band of warriors ready to obey him, would have been deterred by adverse votes of unarmed citizens. There would be nothing alarming in their show of numbers.

It is only when the sense of justice prevails over brute force that the question of the suffrage becomes of any importance. The consent of the governed is asked for, and means are devised for securing that consent. When that consent is ascertained by constitutional means it is agreed that all parties accept it as final.

The reason we obey the decision of the majority is not because the majority is supposed to represent the preponderance of physical force. It is simply that everybody agrees to that method of deciding a controverted question. If we had agreed to submit to the decision of an almost infinitesimal minority of citizens, — let us say to the elderly

elderly gentlemen who compose the Supreme Court of the United States, — the effect would be the same. In fact many of the most important questions are thus decided. The Supreme Court is in a military sense altogether ineffective. It could not possibly enforce its own decrees. But all the fighting strength of the nation can be counted on to defend the Constitution and to make constitutional decisions to be respected. When an insolent party which may be either in the minority or the majority tramples on the plain provisions of the Constitution, it has to reckon not with partisan but with national sentiment. Party lines are instantly forgotten and the solidarity of the nation is made apparent.

It is on the law-abiding disposition of the people that the social order depends. When this fails all majority votes are meaningless. In the utter breakdown of constitutional government "Votes for Women" would be a meaningless shibboleth. But votes for men would be equally futile.

The

That these meditations do not remove the weighty practical difficulties in the way of woman suffrage.

THE judicious reader who may have been following these meditations must have noticed that they have been going around the subject rather than making a frontal attack upon it. But though we have gained no decisive results, this method may not have been altogether fruitless.

As I write I now and then look out of my study upon a boulder-strewn New Hampshire hilltop. Most of these venerable relics of the ice age are too big to be moved by such force as I have at my command. Besides, they are picturesque and I like to see them where they are. But there is a rock in my path which has interfered with my convenience. Thinking it to be the outcropping of the ledge, I have hitherto meekly accepted it as a part of the nature of things against which it was useless to rebel. But yesterday I dug around it with a pick. I discovered that it was only a boulder that had dropped on that spot by accident and was not a structural part of the Granite State. This encouraged me to further explorations. At intervals I have been

been picking at the clay in which it was embedded, and have removed a number of smaller rocks which wedged it in. Having arranged a somewhat precarious fulcrum I have tried it with a crowbar and have felt the rock move.

That is as far as I have gone. It is a largeish boulder, and I need greater leverage and perhaps may call upon other members of the family for assistance. But that the obstruction is removable I have no doubt. I feel quite sure that we can move it out of the way whenever, as we say up here in the country, "we get 'round to it."

That is the way I feel in regard to any obstruction in the way of rational progress. Before we remove it we must remove those habits and prejudices in which it has been embedded and which have held it in place. After the ground around it has been loosened we can move it if we think it worth while to exert ourselves. The first business of the public-spirited citizen is to find out what is desirable. That there are practical difficulties he is well aware.

One

That most women do not take large and disinterested views of public questions.

ONE practical difficulty in the way of the participation of women in public affairs we might as well put bluntly. They do not seem to be intellectually fit for it. There are, of course, exceptions, but it is very rare to find a woman who has a statesmanlike mind. The ordinary woman is interested in persons rather than in principles. Only when a principle is embodied in a person is she aroused to any enthusiasm. She sees the picturesque aspects of a cause, but does not readily follow an economic process. That careful balancing of judgment which is demanded in the solution of complex political problems does not come easily to her. She is inclined to jump at conclusions. She is more likely to be interested in little things which touch her own life than in great things which determine the destinies of nations.

I was struck with these limitations when I listened to the talk of a company of ordinarily intelligent women when the tremendous news came of the breaking-out of the European war. The larger significance of it seemed almost to escape them, or at least could find no adequate

adequate expression. But the moment the talk turned upon the experience of some friend traveling in Europe who could not cash her checks, and who must return in the steerage, they became animated. These petty inconveniences seemed to be more interesting than the vast events that were changing human history.

Does not that, I asked myself, have great significance? Does it not indicate a limitation in thought and imagination? Are not those whose minds react in this way fitted to decide questions of private duty rather than those which are public?

That most men — including most crowned heads — do not take large and disinterested views of public questions.

PURSUING these meditations on the limitations of the feminine mind, I went into the city and stood with a group of men who crowded before the newspaper bulletin boards. Here, said I, are men who, with the consciousness of the great events which are taking place, are waiting breathlessly for the news. A little observation, however, convinced me that the news which these citizens were awaiting was not that

that from the chancelleries of Europe but from the baseball field.

But what of "the chancelleries of Europe"? The phrase is a fine one and suggests to the American mind an almost superhuman political sagacity. I turn to the State papers that have been published giving the correspondence between the sovereigns of Europe on the eve of the great conflict.

What a revelation it was of the limitations of the human mind. The tone was personal as if it were a quarrel between two individuals each jealous of his own dignity and each impatient of a moment's delay. These men, who were in reality spokesmen for millions of people, had evidently a most inadequate sense of their mighty responsibilities. They were thinking of little things rather than of those which concerned the welfare of the whole world. There is little evidence that they measured the full extent of the catastrophe.

When two steamships crash into each other, we take it for granted that some one has blundered. When half a dozen great nations find

find themselves in disastrous collision, we are appalled at the blundering statesmanship.

Nations may perish through the inability of those in authority to distinguish between the big thing and the little. In pursuing a petty advantage they fall into the pit prepared for them. To this danger human institutions are always liable. Government would be an easy thing if the lack of perfect balance in judgment were merely a defect of the feminine mind. Unfortunately it is a defect of the human mind. Even great philosophers are not free from it.

That nevertheless public questions must be considered and human interests must be entrusted to human beings.

IT is distressing that there is so much incompetence in all governments. Government of the competent by the competent has never been realized. Government of the incompetent by the competent sounds well in theory, but in practice it is short-lived, for competence is not an hereditary quality.

Because the masses of the people have always been conscious of their own liability to error they have listened superstitiously to those who have claimed to be free from such human

human infirmity. With pathetic loyalty they have obeyed the rulers by divine right; and they have been disappointed. It is because of the failure of monarchies and aristocracies and theocracies to fulfill their promises that the experiment of democracy is tried.

We cease to expect a political miracle and accept the situation in which we find ourselves. The doctrine that the voice of the people is the voice of God is not the basis of modern democracy. It is simply the echo of the theory of Divine Right transferred from one man to a million. It is the doctrine of those who are still seeking for some magical way of escape from human fallibility.

A true democracy is sober-minded. It realizes that the human mind does not reach final truth at a bound. It is not easy for it to rise above that which is narrowly personal. We are not born public-spirited nor with the ability to think nationally. We must be educated for citizenship and all its responsibilities. We are to expect that the people will make mistakes; our hope is that they will be able to recognize and correct these mistakes.

The

The vote is chiefly valuable in this corrective process. It is not so much like the engine in an aeroplane as like the "stabilizer" which keeps the machine steady. When the leaders in a democracy make too many mistakes the common sense of the electorate is brought into play to preserve the balance.

Political prescience is a rare quality, and so is that "huge, heroic magnanimity" which only now and then manifests itself. But fortunately common sense is more generally diffused. And plain, ordinary common sense is the chief thing which is demanded of a voter.

GOVERNOR BRADFORD tells us how the Pilgrims came to leave the Old World, "not out of any new-fangledness or other like giddie humor by which men are often times transported to their great hurt and danger, but for sundrie weightie and solid reasons."

"That all great and honourable actions are accompanied with great difficulties and must be both enterprised and overcome with answerable courages."

We have long since ceased to charge these bold adventurers with new-fangledness, but doubtless there were many in Amsterdam who

who shook their heads gravely over their "giddie humor."

It was only after the grave and solid reasons had been recited that attention was given to the difficulties that must be encountered.

"It was granted the dangers were great but not desperate, the difficulties were many but not invincible. For though there were many of them likely, yet they were not certaine; it might be sundrie of the things feared might never befale; others by providente care and the use of good means might in a great measure be prevented; and all of them through the help of God by fortitude and patience might either be borne or over come."

Those who believe that the next inevitable step in the evolution of democracy is to give every adult citizen the suffrage do not minimize the practical difficulties. They only declare that there are weighty and solid reasons why we should go forward and not backward. It is right that thoughtful women should hesitate before assuming new responsibilities. But if they are convinced that the public welfare

welfare can be served by them directly instead of indirectly, they will respond with "answerable courages."

Says the old record of the men and women who impressed their spirit in America: —

"*After many other perticular things answered and aledged on both sids it was fully concluded by the major parte to put this designe in execution and to prosecute it by the best means they could.*"

THE END

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